

Employer**Number of Employees****City of Port St. Lucie****535****St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department****527****Aegis Communications/IGI****460****Wal-Mart****456****Indian River Community College****446****Convergys Corporation****423****Club Med/Village Hotels of Sandpiper****400****Government**

St. Lucie County is a non-charter county governed by a Board of County Commissioners consisting of five-members. The commissioners are elected at large to serve a period of four years. Elections are staggered to provide continuity between boards. The Commissioners are:

**Doug Coward, Chair
Cliff Barnes , Vice-Chair
John Bruhn
Frannie Hutchinson
Paula Lewis**

**District 2
District 5
District 1
District 4
District 3**

The county is managed on a daily basis by a professional administrator, Douglas Anderson, who is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.

Education

The public school system is county-wide and is governed by the School Board consisting of five members each elected for a four-year term. The school system is comprised of 24 elementary schools (grades K-5), six middle schools (grades 6-8) and five high schools. St. Lucie County also has one exceptional student education center, two magnet schools, and two alternative schools. The school system employs approximately 1,500 teachers and 1,100 support staff.

Higher educational resources within the County include: Indian River Community College (IRCC) and extension campuses of Florida Atlantic University, University of Florida, and Barry University. These prestigious schools enable an individual to obtain a four-year degree without having to leave the area.

Other Resources

St. Lucie County is situated in an area where the Florida Turnpike, Interstate 95, US Highway 1, the St. Lucie County International Airport, the Port of Fort Pierce, and the Florida East Coast Railway system are in close proximity to each other. This provides for easy access to all the County has to offer as well as superior commercial distribution opportunities.

The County is also the home of two prestigious research facilities -- Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and the Smithsonian Marine Station, Fort Pierce. Additionally, the University of Florida has established an agricultural research center in the County, and the United States Department of Agriculture has selected St. Lucie County as a location for a research facility.

The St. Lucie County Sports Complex is the site of many public events and includes a modern baseball stadium and practice fields that serve as the spring training home of the New York Mets baseball team. It is also home of the St. Lucie Mets, a local farm club that provides near major league quality baseball action for fans at a very affordable rate.

the unincorporated area. The Fort Pierce Police Department and the Port St. Lucie Police Departments service their respective cities. The three work closely to ensure St. Lucie County is a safe place to work and live.

Incorporated Municipalities

Fort Pierce (37,516) serves as the County Seat and cover 21 square miles. Its history dates back to the Seminole Indian Wars when Army Lt. Col Benjamin Kendrick Pierce established a fort at the site in 1837. After the fighting ended, Fort Pierce remained as a permanent settlement. Water transportation and fishing marked the early economy, along with the production of pineapple (a crop that was eventually replaced with citrus). Fort Pierce remains the commercial center of St. Lucie County, although it is smaller in population and land area than Port St. Lucie. The City of Fort Pierce is governed by a five-member city commission which employs a professional manager.

The City of Port St. Lucie (pop. 88,769) is the largest city both geographically and in terms of population. It covers 80 square miles. It was incorporated in 1961 as a residential community and was originally developed in large measure as a retirement community by the General Development Corporation. The City of Port St. Lucie is governed by a five-member city council and also employs a professional manager.

St. Lucie Village (pop. 604) is a small enclave covering 1.5 square miles of territory in North St. Lucie County along the Indian River.

Vision of St. Lucie County

St. Lucie has a Vision for its future. This Vision for Fort Pierce, Port St. Lucie, St. Lucie Village and the unincorporated areas defines the St. Lucie of 2010 and beyond. This Vision provides:

- T An education system and business partnership that provides a work force competitive in the global economy;*
- T An uncompromised quality of life for all ages and cultures to live, learn, work, and play;*
- T A public/private partnership that creates a political and business climate conducive to economic development and high quality job growth while protecting our natural environment;*
- T Infrastructure that supports the education, quality of life and economic development Visions;*
- T Streamlined government with minimum duplication of services; and*
- T A public/private partnership providing the leadership to achieve our shared Vision for education, quality of life, economic development, infrastructure, and government.*



ST. LUCIE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FINANCIAL POLICY



FISCAL POLICY STATEMENT

St. Lucie County has an important responsibility to its citizens to correctly account for public funds, to manage county finances wisely and to plan for adequate funding of services desired by the public. With the rapid growth in the county, St. Lucie County needs to ensure that it is capable of adequately funding and providing local government services needed by the community.

Sound fiscal policies that are realistic and consistent provide useful guidance for the long-term programming of services and facilities. They also provide a set of assumptions under which budget and tax decisions should be made. While established for the best management of government resources, generally accepted fiscal policy also helps set the parameters for government's role in the broader economy of the community. The following fiscal policies set as a framework to guide the operations of the County.

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

All operations of St. Lucie County are accounted for by the use of fund accounting, in order to provide proper accountability for the different kinds of resources. Various funds have been established to track transactions. Funds with similar objectives, activities and legal restrictions are placed in one the following three groups:

Governmental Funds - These funds account for general governmental functions, such as the court system and law enforcement. They use a spending measurement focus; which means that only current assets and liabilities generally are included on the fund types' balance

sheets, and the difference between these assets and liabilities is classified as fund balance. Governmental Funds types are classified into five generic fund types as follow:

- C **General Fund** is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in a specific fund. Most countywide activities are accounted for in this fund.
- C **Special Revenue Funds** account for proceeds of specific revenue sources that legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes.
- C **Debt Service Funds** are used to account for the accumulation of resources for and the payment of general long-term debt principal, interest and other costs associated with long-term debt.
- C **Capital Project Funds** are used to account for the purchase or construction of major capital facilities, such as buildings, infrastructure and lands.

Proprietary Funds – These funds are used to account for governments’ ongoing activities that are similar to those of private enterprise. They are accounted for on a cost of service. There are two types of Proprietary Funds:

- C **Enterprise Funds** are used to account for the provision of public services that are similar to services provided by business enterprises. Operating costs of such funds are paid from user charges or other non-governmental revenue.
- C **Internal Service Funds** is the financing of goods or services provided by one department to other departments within the same government on a cost reimbursement basis.

Fiduciary Funds – These funds account for assets belonging to others, held by a government in a trustee capacity or as an agent. Agency and expendable trust funds are accounted for like governmental funds. Non-expendable trusts are accounted for in the same manner as proprietary funds. Fiduciary Funds consists of two groups:

- C **Expendable Trust Funds** account for assets held by the County in trust for administration and disbursement for specific purposes.
- C **Agency Funds** account for assets belonging to others, which are held pending disposition.

BUDGETARY BASIS

- **Modified Accrual Basis for Governmental Funds.**

Governmental Funds include the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Debt Service Funds, Capital Project Funds and Expendable Trust Funds. Modified accrual is essentially accrual accounting, modified to recognize the governmental environment and unique

accounting measurement objectives. Revenues are estimated for the fiscal year when they are quantifiable and there is a reasonable expectation that they will be collected during that period. In most cases, expenditures are recorded when the good or service is actually delivered, regardless of when the funds are disbursed. As a budgetary control measure, the funds will be encumbered or 'reserved' when the good or service is ordered.

- **Accrual Basis for Proprietary Funds.**

Proprietary Funds include the Internal Service Funds and the Enterprise Funds. (Although, St. Lucie County no longer has 'Internal Service Funds') Under the Accrual basis revenues are budgeted based on the measurable amount expected to be 'earned' during the fiscal year. Expenditure estimates are developed for all expenses anticipated to be 'incurred' during the fiscal year. Transactions are recorded when they occur - regardless of when cash is received or disbursed. This is essentially the same method used in the private sector, however there are a few differences:

1. Capital expenditures and debt principal are budgeted as appropriations
2. Compensated absence accruals are not budgeted

- **Fund Balance.**

Fund balance is the result of the previous fiscal year's beginning cash balance plus revenues received minus actual expenditures. It includes unallocated resources which may be used to fund new projects/programs as well as unspent allocated funds which will be carried forward to fund those existing projects/programs. Fund balance is adjusted for inventory and other non-cash assets and liabilities.

- **Depreciation.**

For budget purposes, depreciation is recognized in a designated reserve only to the extent that it is funded.

GRANTS BUDGETING

Grants are funds awarded to St. Lucie County by the federal government, state agencies, or other organizations to finance projects such as capital improvement, cultural and educational activities, environmental projects, economic development, planning and research, etc. Grant revenues are received into governmental or proprietary funds related to the project. Each grant is individually budgeted as a sub-fund subordinate to its hierarchy governmental or proprietary fund. Transfers of grant local matches, interest monies and residual cash between a grant and its hierarchy fund are permitted without Board approval.

CAPITAL BUDGETING

St. Lucie County maintains a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), which covers a five-year period and is updated annually. The Office of Management and Budget determines the amount of funds available for capital projects. Proposed projects are prioritized and the available funds are allocated accordingly. A separate section of this document is designated for the CIP projects detail. Projects in the CIP this fiscal year are funded; however out years are estimated needs and may exceed future available revenues.

GENERAL BUDGET POLICY

1. The operating budget authorizing expenditure of county money will be adopted annually by the Board at the fund level.
2. The budget shall reflect the estimated beginning balances of all funds and all planned revenues or receipts for each fund for which the county must maintain accounts.
3. No monies shall be expended or disbursed from accounts of the Board of County Commissioners except pursuant to authorization reflected in the adopted budget. The Clerk of Courts shall advise the Board of any exceptions to this policy required by law or generally accepted accounting practice.
4. The budgeted expenditures and reserves of each fund (including reserves for contingencies, cash flow and all other purposes) will equal the sum of projected fund balance at the beginning of the fiscal year and all revenues and receipts which reasonably can be expected to be received during the fiscal year.
5. A reserve for contingency will be budgeted in the general fund budget, the fine and forfeiture fund and the airport fund for reallocation by the Board as needed during the year to fund unexpected operations or events.
6. A reserve for emergency use will be budgeted each year in an amount to be determined by the Board. This will also serve as a reserve for cash flow to support operations until new budget year revenues are received. In no case will this reserve exceed the projected cash needs for 90 days of operations, or 20% of the combined General and Fine and Forfeiture Fund budgets, whichever is less.
7. Transfers:
 - a. Transfers to reserve accounts may be made during the fiscal year by the County Administrator or the Management &

Budget Director as required for proper management of the budget.

- b. Transfers among expenditure or revenue accounts may be made during the fiscal year by the Management & Budget Director, subject to approval by the County Administrator, if re-allocations within a fund are determined to be needed. No transfers having an impact on capital facility improvement will be made without Board authority.
 - c. No transfer affecting the total allocations to a Constitutional Officer may be made without Board approval.
 - d. No transfer may be made between funds if the result of such transfer will be to change the adopted total budget of a fund, except pursuant to a public hearing and Board action to amend the adopted budget.
 - e. Transfers from reserves for contingency will require approval of the Board.
- 8. Changes in the adopted total budget of a fund will be made only with Board approval of a budget amendment resolution.
 - 9. To provide information to the Board on budget and financial operations the Office of Management & Budget will prepare quarterly analyses of financial condition, and not less than semi-annual analyses of debt service and grants administration.
 - 10. The operating budget will reflect programmatic expectations of the Board and County Administrator for each department. The budget will emphasize the relationship between financial and managerial (operations) planning.
 - 11. For purposes of budget preparation, in the event policies or stated desires of the Board regarding appropriations or service levels prove to be incompatible with forecasted revenues or revenue policies, these conflicts will be resolved in favor of the revenue policy.
 - 12. The Capital Improvement Budget showing estimated annualized costs of capital projects will be updated on an annual basis.

Revenue Policy

- 1. The use of general ad valorem tax revenues will be limited to the General, Law Enforcement & Courts (Fine & Forfeiture), MSTU Funds, and dependent special districts, unless required in other funds by bond indenture agreements or by the terms of municipal service taxing units ordinance.
- 2. The use of ad valorem tax revenues based on millages levied for the Mosquito Control, and Erosion Control Special Districts will be limited to those districts.
- 3. The use of gas tax revenues will be limited to the Transportation Trust and Transportation Projects Funds, unless required in other

funds by bond indenture agreements.

4. The use of sales tax revenues will be limited to the General and Law Enforcement & Courts (Fine & Forfeiture) funds except when allocated to debt service funds to meet non-ad valorem debt service requirements.
5. Pursuant to Ordinance, Tourist Development Tax proceeds will be appropriated as follows:
 - a. 1/4 for tourist advertising and promotion within St. Lucie County.
 - b. 1/2 for stadium expenses.
 - c. 1/4 debt service for stadium renovations.
6. The use of revenues pledged to bondholders will conform in every respect to the bond covenants committing those revenues.
7. Periodic cost studies of all County services for which user fees are imposed will be prepared, and proposed fee adjustments will be presented for Board consideration. Fee revenues will be anticipated for purposes of budget preparation using fee schedules, which have been adopted by the Board.
8. County staff will continue to aggressively pursue grant funds. For purposes of preparing the annual budget, revenues will be budgeted at actual award levels when known, and at anticipated grant award levels for continuing grants. Other grants will be budgeted upon notice of award.
9. Ad valorem taxes will be anticipated for purposes of operating budget preparation at 95% of the final assessed taxable value as determined by the Property Appraiser.
10. Millages for Debt Service will be established at the amounts, which will generate sufficient revenue, to make all required payments plus any reserve amount deemed prudent by the Office of Management and Budget or prescribed by covenant or ordinance.
11. All revenues, which are reasonably expected to be unexpended and unencumbered at the end of the fiscal year, will be anticipated as "fund balance" in the budget of the following fiscal year. Funds budgeted but unexpended in salary and benefit line items shall lapse to fund balance.

Debt Policy

1. Neither the Florida Constitution, Florida Statutes, nor the Board of County Commissioners place a limit on the amount of debt the